WHAT DEFEATED GERMANY?

A GROUP of men were standing round the fireplace at the Country Club after their game of golf. They were discussing the cause of Germany's defeat. One laid it to the food shortage, another to American forces, another to the diplomacy of the Allied governments, which had ranged against Germany virtually the whole of the civilized world.

Just at that point, Dr. Edgeworth, the pastor of a local church, joined the group, and they turned to him for his opinion. The good doctor thought a moment, and then he said slowly, "You men know me well enough, I think, to feel that I am not so narrow that every thought I have ends in a church spire. And so you won't think me guilty of a pious platitude when I say that I firmly believe that the determining factor in Germany's defeat was God.

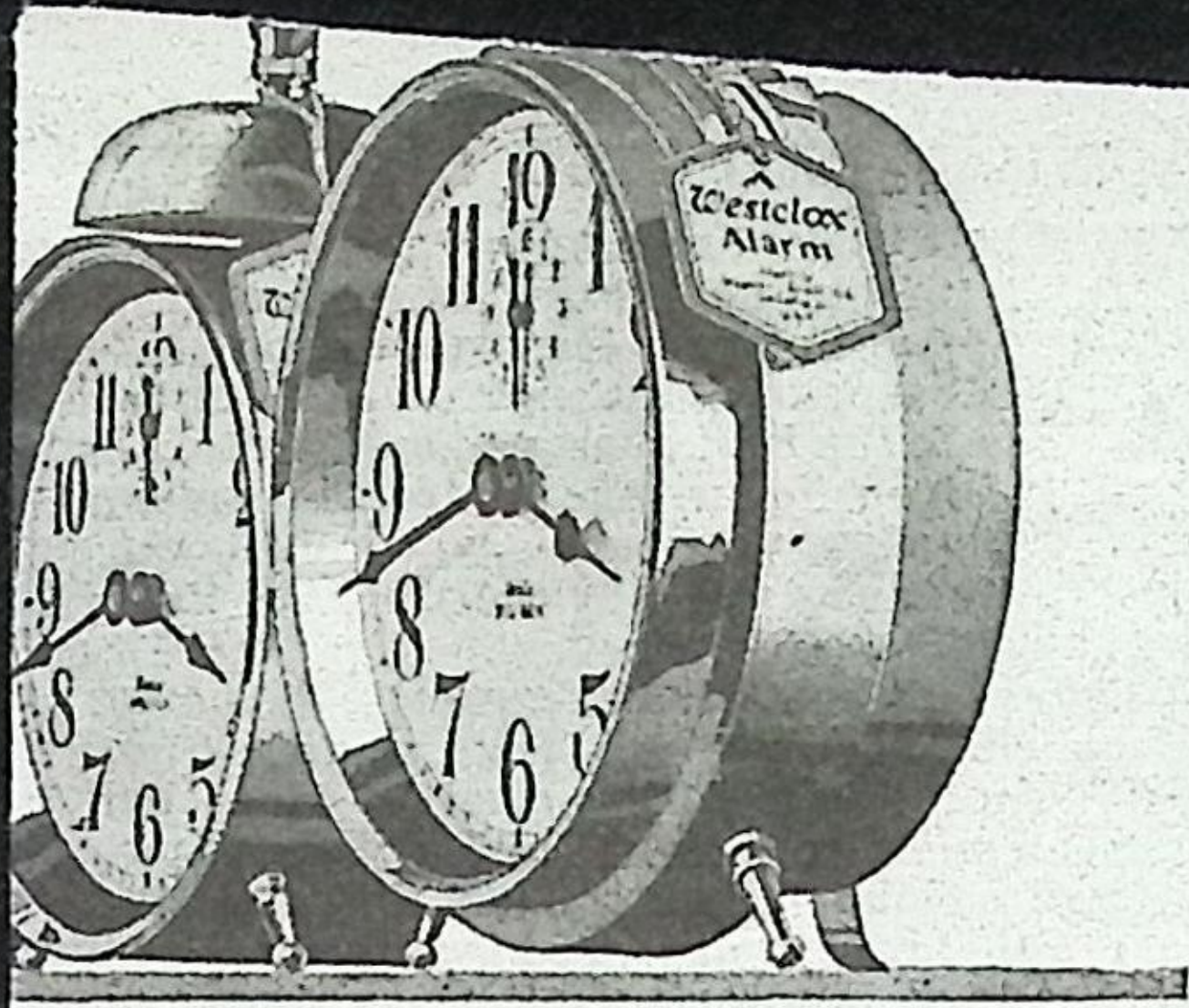
"Do you remember," he continued, "what Victor Hugo said about Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo? It runs this way: 'Was it possible for Napoleon to win at Waterloo? We answer, No. Why? Because of Wellington? No. Because of Blücher? No. Because of the rain? No. Because of *God*. It was time this vast man should fall. He had been impeached before the throne of the Infinite, and his fall had been decreed.' And then Victor Hugo adds, 'Napoleon bothered God.' "

"But I don't see how Hugo can prove it," replied one of the men.

"No, he couldn't prove that the intervention of God defeated Napoleon at Waterloo," answered the doctor, "not with mathematical precision. This sort of evidence is the most ticklish in the world, but I heard an officer from overseas say that he could lay his finger on no less than three instances where nothing but a miracle saved the Allies.

"There are certain historical incidents that get written down as bearing marks of the intervention of God. The storm that defeated the Spanish Armada is one, and men are beginning to look at the first battle of the Marne as another. Competent authorities tell us that the German defeat cannot be adequately explained on human grounds. If it is true, as Herbert Spencer says, that we live in the presence of a moral order, then something must happen when that order is violated. That Germany violated that order no one doubts, and when it did so it was fighting against the stars in their courses.

"The text that has been running through my head ever since Germany crumpled is, 'Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts,' and I get a lot of comfort as I think of it. Ours is a wonderful world. Wonderful for its chemistry, wonderful for its geometric precision, wonderful for its vital processes, but most wonderful of all for the moral purpose streaking it like veins of gold. The world is pitched to good. Its movement is that way. Every evil thing has, therefore, the seeds of its own destruction born with it. Your Pharaohs, Sennacheribs, Neros, Attilas, Mohammeds, Alvas, Napoleons and Kaiser Wilhelm II's continually arise, putting the nations in fear and threatening to uproot civilization itself. But there is always some rock on which their armadas split; some Moscow in which their armies perish."



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